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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7075
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000768

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UN](#) [IS](#) [LE](#)
SUBJECT: UNIFIL TCC MEETING: DPKO AGAIN HIGHLIGHTS
HIZBALLAH ARMS CACHE EXPLOSION AND OBSTRUCTIONS OF MOVEMENT

REF: USUN NEW YORK 721

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: On August 13, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Mulet briefed Security Council members and troop contributing countries (TCCs) in a private meeting on the July 14 explosion of an arms cache in southern Lebanon and obstruction of UNIFIL's movement and initial investigation. The briefing was nearly identical to Under Secretary-General Alain Le Roy's briefing to Council members in consultations on July 23. Mulet said the cache represented a clear violation of UNSCR 1701, that the arms were in "good order" and actively maintained, and that the evidence indicates the arms were Hizballah's. Mulet said UNIFIL fully complied with its mandate during the Khirbat Selim incident and stressed that it had worked in tandem with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) during the entire time of the incident and the subsequent investigation. Mulet highlighted UNIFIL's forthcoming comprehensive review and that the Maritime Task Force is stretched to its limit. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) On August 13, Security Council members and UNIFIL troop contributing countries (TCCs) met in a private meeting in advance of the Security Council's August 20 consultation on UNIFIL's mandate renewal. Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmund Mulet briefed on the July 14 explosion of an arms cache in southern Lebanon at Khirbat Selim and the obstruction of UNIFIL's movement and investigation near the site. The briefing was nearly identical to Under Secretary-General Alain Le Roy's briefing to Council members in consultations on July 23 (reftel). Mulet said the cache represented a clear violation of UNSCR 1701, that the arms were in "good order" and actively maintained, and there were indications that they were under the control of Hizballah.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Mulet also noted that on July 18, 14 UNIFIL peacekeepers were lightly injured when over 100 civilians obstructed UNIFIL's access to a suspicious house one kilometer from the Khirbat Selim site and that the crowd included members of Hizballah. Mulet also briefed on the events leading to the Blue Line violation by Lebanese civilians in the vicinity of Kfar Shouba on July 17. TCC Qatar raised IDF activities in the Shebaa Farms area which Lebanese civilians had protested on July 17. Mulet responded that the Shebaa Farms area is south of the Blue Line and outside of UNIFIL's area of operations. Nevertheless, UNIFIL had contacted the parties, he said, and urged maximum restraint. Mulet noted that the IDF had removed immediately (and before the July 17 protest) the flags which had caused concern. TCC Qatar also asked about progress on mine clearance. Mulet noted that 280 sites that are more than 500 meters from known strike locations have been identified from the cluster munitions data provided in May by Israel. These sites now must be surveyed.

[1](#)4. (SBU) When asked by TCC India if UNIFIL had complied with its mandate during the Khirbat Selim incident, Mulet

responded that UNIFIL had fully complied with its mandate since it had worked in tandem with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) during the entire time of the incident and the subsequent investigation. Mulet noted, however, that UNIFIL does have the ability to independently carry out tasks to make sure the area of operations is not used for hostile means.

15. (SBU) Mulet highlighted UNIFIL's forthcoming comprehensive review, announced in the Secretary-General's August 6 letter to Council members. He said it would be an assessment of the force structure, assets, and requirements, and underlined when questioned by TCC India, that it would not include a review of UNIFIL's mandate or concept of operations. France asked Mulet for the LAF's troop levels in the area of operations since in 2006 the Council had anticipated there would be 15,000 troops in the area. Mulet said that while they did not have the exact figures there were three LAF brigades in the area, totaling approximately 5,000 troops.

16. (SBU) Mulet followed up on the summary of the Maritime Task Force (MTF) in the Secretary-General's August 6 letter. He underscored that the MTF is stretched to its limit with only seven of the required twelve vessels. He did note that Indonesia does plan to contribute an additional corvette class vessel. He thanked Belgium and France for their recent leadership tours of the MTF and said Germany would be assuming the lead on September 1 for a three-month period. He issued an appeal for TCCs to make more maritime assets available which was echoed by Italy.

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17. Note: The following countries contribute troops to UNIFIL: Belgium, Brunei, China, Croatia, Cyprus, El Salvador, France, FYR of Macedonia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Tanzania, and Turkey. End Note.
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